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ABSTRACT

A national technical assistance conference aimed at advancing the knowledge and skills of family day care providers in their roles as caregivers and as leaders in the day care field was convened in April, 1981. Presentations and discussions at the conference focused on four broad topic areas: (1) the family day care provider as a caregiver, (2) the family day care provider as a leader, (3) training for family day care providers, and (4) the USDA Food Program. Individuals active in family day care covered certain sections of the conference and prepared brief reports for publication. The fourth topic area -- the USDA Food Program -- is excluded from this report due to the many changes in food policy since the conference was held. A list of conference planning committee members and the conference program and roster are appended. (RH)

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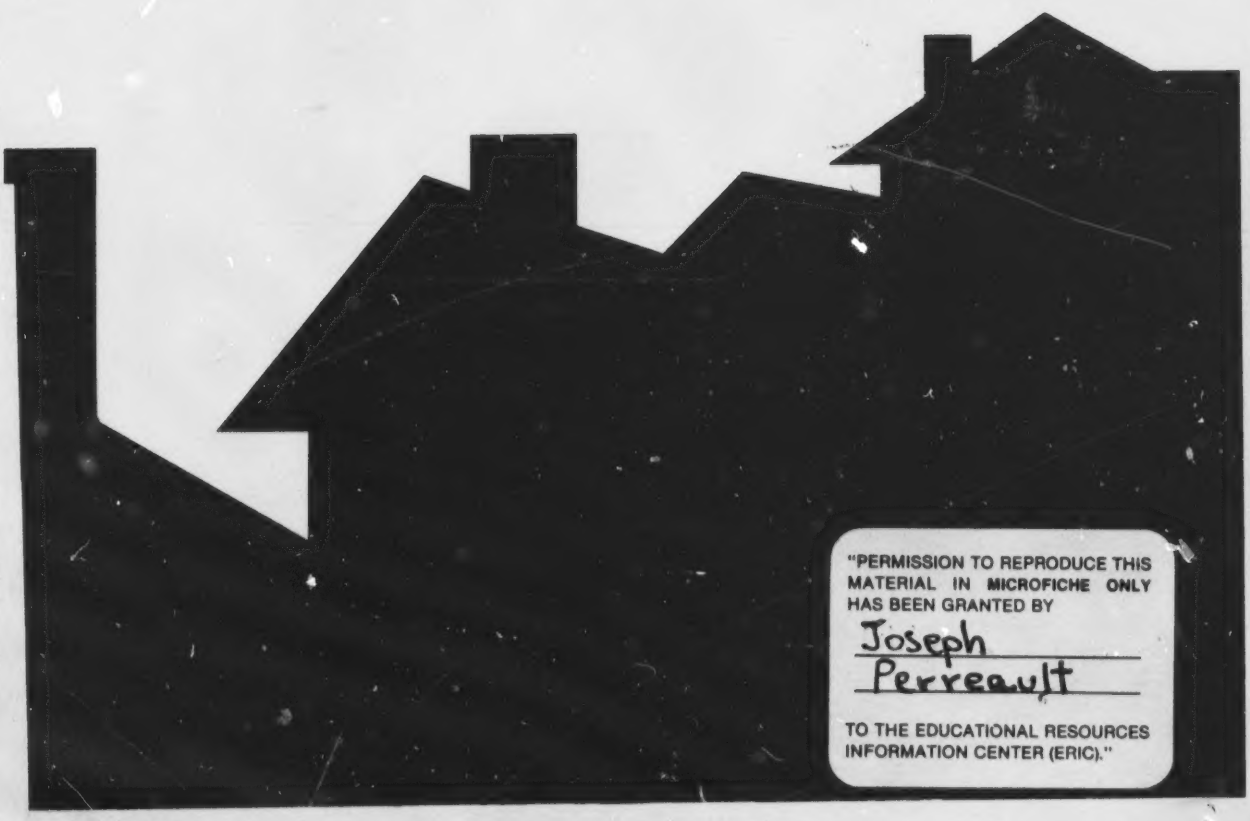
BUILDING BRIDGES

REPORT OF A FAMILY DAY CARE CONFERENCE



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BUILDING BRIDGES

REPORT OF A FAMILY DAY CARE CONFERENCE

APRIL, 1981

Edited by Nancy E. Travis
and Joe Perreault

Although the problems involved in family day care seem overwhelming at times, solutions are being discovered, tested, and shared through conferences, newsletters, and all kinds of support groups. Providers are building bridges between the islands.

Save the Children®
THE CHILD CARE SUPPORT CENTER
1182 West Peachtree Street, N.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30309

February, 1982

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THE FAMILY DAY CARE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CONFERENCE, held each spring, is an opportunity for a national exchange of information about family day care. The conference helps advance the knowledge and skills of family day care providers in their roles as caregivers and as leaders in the day care field.

The conference gives equal time to individuals who work in support of family day care. There are sessions of value to trainers, child care food program sponsors, licensing staff, state policy makers, advocates, and community groups interested in family day care.

The conference is sponsored by Save the Children, Child Care Support Center, but it is made possible by voluntary cooperation of family day care advocates from throughout the country.

THE CHILD CARE SUPPORT CENTER is part of Save the Children, Southern States Office. Save the Children serves the needs of low income communities in the United States and most foreign countries.

The purpose of the Child Care Support Center is to improve the quality of day care programs in the South, with special emphasis on improving management skills of day care staff and providing support to groups interested in family day care. The center conducts regional workshops, offers training for local day care groups on request, provides on-site evaluation and consultation to individual programs, and develops written materials on management and other major issues in day care.

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PREFACE

The Child Care Support Center has attempted to increase public understanding and acceptance of family day care as a valuable alternative for child care in the South. We began by developing three publications on family day care: *Starting a Family Day Care Agency, Family Day Care Associations in the South,* and *Family Day Care as a Child Protection Service.* We also offered consultation to public and private agencies on developing or using family day care.

As we found more and more groups interested in exploring family day care, and as agencies began to look for ways to give additional support to family day care, we decided to bring people together to exchange experiences and information and to identify resources that might be made available to family day care providers.

The first Technical Assistance Conference was small and specifically geared to rural areas in several of the Appalachian states. Each year the conference attendance grew larger, and people from outside the Southern region began to participate. For the last two years, the conference has been a national conference, drawing people from across the United States and Canada.

Many people who were unable to attend or who did not know of it in time to attend, have asked for information about the conference. Therefore, this year we decided to publish a report that would give something of the flavor of the conference and a picture of what is happening in family day care around the country. Several people who are active in family day care were asked to cover certain sections of the conference and to prepare reports for publication. We want to give special thanks to those people--June Rogers, Lynn Manfredi, Deb Fish, Rhoda Redleaf, and Nancy White Blecha. It was primarily a labor of love.

It is impossible to capture in a report the kind of enthusiasm and the eager sharing of information that went on as people from different parts of the country got together for the conference, but we hope it will help other planners of similar conferences and will identify some interesting areas that can be pursued further.

Nancy E. Travis
Director, Save the Children
Southern States Office

Joe Perreault, Coordinator
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Southern States Office

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PART I

THE FAMILY DAY CARE PROVIDER AS A CAREGIVER

By
Lynn A. Manfredi

THE PROVIDER AS A CAREGIVER

INTRODUCTION

Recognition is growing among professionals and parents of young children that family day care providers have the potential to be more than just babysitters, more than stand-ins for parents. They are in a position to facilitate learning for parents and children. Rather than simply substituting for working parents, caregivers in family day care homes are more likely to be considered supports to each child's growth and development. They are givers of care, "professional nurturers," who are helping to raise a significant portion of the future generation.

Even when other options exist, the homey, relaxed, "extended-family" atmosphere of family day care is the most popular form of regular care. Estimates vary, but it is believed that approximately 50 percent of children in day care for ten hours a week or more are in family day care homes. That is quite a few customers for a service which is only beginning to claim its rightful place as an important form of child care. A network of family day care providers and professional supporters grows larger and stronger every year. As appreciation of this service blossoms, caregivers are realizing: "I can't call myself 'just a babysitter' any longer!"

The most exciting result of this growing network is that as providers and those who support family day care come together in various ways, the sharing of ideas, problems, solutions, goals, and objectives has begun the long overdue job of raising family day care to a more professional status. Slowly but surely, the effects of this process have become evident.

A significant sign of successful consciousness-raising is that the use of the title "caregiver" is replacing that of "babysitter" with greater frequency in family day care circles and beyond. It is recognition that providers are doing more than simply sitting with babies all day long.

As in all services, the quality is sometimes uneven. Parents must take the responsibility for selecting and monitoring the day care home. However, only family day care can meet the wide range of child and family needs that

parents have, while offering a variety of services and flexibility in arrangements. When the advantages are matched with the extended family feeling that most caregivers quite naturally create when they take children into their homes for day care, it is easy to see why parents and professionals are beginning to look at family day care with a new admiration and appreciation.

SERVING CHILDREN OF SPECIAL AGES AND SPECIAL NEEDS

A number of workshops explored the needs of children in terms of the child's age and special needs. These sessions discussed serving infants and toddlers, preschool children, school-age children, handicapped children, and neglected and abused children.

Workshop leaders pointed out that even though some providers may not have formal training in child development, they are frequently called upon to meet the needs of children from infants to school age, and to care for children with specific needs.

Because the relaxed, small groupings that are natural to a family day care home allow flexibility and time for the provider to give much individual attention, the provider may be in a better position to give special care than larger, more structured day care options.

As opportunities open up for providers to get child development training, they are more and more frequently being considered as the answer to many child care needs.

These workshops began with a panel discussion by:

Betty Simpson
Ann Nickerson
June Rogers
Carol Uecker
Mabel Pitts

MEETING THE NEEDS OF INFANTS

Alice Honig

Alice Honig pointed out that the needs of infants and toddlers include:

> The time and attention of a sensitive and loving adult who is willing to develop a one-to-one relationship with a non-verbal child and respond to that child's unique way of expressing his/her individual needs.
>
> Stimulation: bright colors, interesting textures, things that move and make sounds, a variety of foods to taste--

all within a safe "baby-proof" environment where the child is encouraged to discover and learn.

A predictable but flexible schedule with a calm daily tempo to allow each child time to have needs met.

Hugs, cuddling, and an adult who can serve as an affectionate "home base" that will give the children security they need to try new things and to tackle the world.

Family day care homes are particularly well suited for meeting the needs of very young children. A home is filled with fascinating, real-life objects to discover (along with some that caregivers wish would never be discovered!). Cans, boxes, pots, pans, vacuum cleaners, old envelopes, food containers and the like, provide endless opportunities for inexpensive exploration and learning within a casual, accepting atmosphere. Furthermore, the small groups in family day care allow the provider to give the time and attention that infants and toddlers need for social and emotional development.

Other children in a family day care home are important to an infant or toddler's development. As Betty Simpson pointed out, few things are more enriching than watching a two-year-old take the hand of a ten-month-old, helping him to try to walk. The day care home gives the parent and child a sense of being in an extended family, since most children develop a secure, at-home feeling in a day care home which enhances his or her ability to accept and grow. Everyone benefits from interactions in family day care.

It is easier for everyone in the home to stay healthy since fewer children mean fewer germs. Illnesses are more quickly noticed and isolated in a home setting, and there are fewer "victims" when sickness does strike. Since the home setting allows the caregiver more time to develop awareness of each family and their day-to-day routines, the caregiver is able to understand a baby and his or her moods and responses to learning. Therefore, it is easier to distinguish between an oncoming illness and droopiness caused by something that happened at the child's home.

Best of all, parents seem more comfortable handing their infants and toddlers over to an all-day "mother figure" than to a group of interchangeable teachers. Parents have a better sense of how a day may go in

a family day care home since it is more like a day in the child's own home than a school setting might be.

Since most caregivers are willing to work with the needs of parents and children, erratic work schedules, sleep cycles, or eating patterns do not pose problems in family day care homes. All of this adds up to parents who feel good about their child care arrangements which, in turn, helps their children.

Confidence in arrangements helps build a sharing relationship between parent and caregiver. The daily conversations help to keep each child's life as consistent as possible between the two homes and help the provider learn of individual needs and preferences of the children in care. This harmonizing of lifestyles, along with loving attention and listening to cues, is an important way a provider can meet a child's needs in the first years of life.

Not all caregivers run model family day care homes, but many have a real talent for providing quality infant and toddler care. Many enter the profession with a genuine love for children, and perhaps have reared a child of their own. Even caregivers with little formal education often have natural tendencies to provide the kind of cuddling and nurturing babies especially need. Most providers are willing and excited to find better ways to serve the children in their care regardless of the level of their education or experience.

Alice Honig suggested six secrets for supplying a nourishing environment in which the very young child may flourish:

1. Embed the curriculum in daily routines when possible. Diapering and feeding and household chores give good opportunities for lots of talking and learning experiences.

2. Loving and learning are intertwined in infancy. A caring relationship is necessary to permit an infant to learn. Be sensitive to infant signals. Meet needs promptly. Exploration and competence flow from secure attachments.

3. Matchmaking skills boost the baby's chances for success if the task is geared to the baby's developmental abilities.

4. Learning involves a struggle. Arrange opportunities sometimes for a baby to learn on his or her own from encounters with materials at an appropriately challenging level. Toddlers see-saw between cooperation and a fierce desire to try to do things on their own and in their own way. Be judicious in offering help. Empathize with the toddler's struggle between needing intimate closeness and yet wanting to be big and bold and independent. Appreciate this struggle and allow for it in daily routines.

5. "Dance the developmental ladder." If a task is too hard, find another that is a little easier. If the baby is bored, challenge him or her with some new task.

6. Learn from each other and from each encounter. A provider who watches baby's interactions with people and events can sharpen noticing skills. Positive engagements with babies increase our abilities to become ever more harmonoius and effective infant caregivers. Learn your strengths and weaknesses. Gather joy--gather learning!

A provider of many years summed up this workshop experience by stating, "I thought I knew everything there was to know about babies, but I can see now that I hardly know anything. I'm going to every workshop I can from now on!"

MEETING THE NEEDS OF PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

June Rogers

In her keynote presentation, June Rogers called the preschool years the "magic years." Children in this age group are three, four, and five years old and the most likely age to be placed in a day care center or preschool for the educational component they offer. While most children in this category are ready for some kind of social setting, some experience problems sharing one or two adults with so many other children if they are in a large group for eight to ten hours a day.

Like infants and toddlers, preschoolers need a predictable but flexible environment and a sensitive caregiver who can discover and meet individual needs. Parents often prefer to keep their children in a family day care home, but they also want their children to have more educational stimulation than the average caregiver can offer. Since few preschools can

match the kind of adult-child relationships possible in family day care homes, parents find themselves in a tug-of-war between two equally important needs.

Family day care is popular with parents who work unusual hours or who wish to have more input about the way their children spend their day than schools can allow. While schools are usually understanding of individual family styles and try to work with parents as much as possible, they have an obligation to have standard schedules and policies which will meet the needs of the greatest number of children and parents. Once again, family day care homes are a parent's best option for flexibility, individualized care, and a closer match between family and day care routines in a child's life.

June Rogers stressed the need for parents and caregivers to share as much as possible about each other's values, preferences, and living styles before care begins. The preschool years are a time for learning respect for rules and limits and for gaining an understanding of adult expectations. The more continuity there is between households, the easier it is for children to function and grow in this vital developmental stage. Children are also happier and more cooperative when expectations are communicated clearly with a minimum of inconsistencies between significant adults in their lives. The caregiver may need to develop household rules for all to follow, but this should always be done with respect for the rules parents have at home to avoid confusion.

Children at this age particularly need clear, consistent discipline for misbehaviors and chances to solve social problems with a minimum of adult intervention. Therefore, discipline practices should be worked out with parents and children before a problem arises so that when the inevitable happens and a preschooler tests the rules (usually with great frequency around age four) limits can be reinforced firmly and in a way that is comfortable for parents and caregiver.

Family day care providers are in a much better position than large schools to offer this kind of continuity in limits and discipline. Experienced caregivers are also in a good position to demonstrate healthy adult-child interactions and to help some parents develop

better parenting skills. As one workshop participant pointed out, providers are often nurturers of parents as well as of children.

Ms. Rogers told her audience that although many family day care providers are not yet trained to offer the formal education that preschools provide, "a home is a most wonderful place to learn." There are the traditional toys that teach, of course, and books and educational games are essential to any preschool curriculum. However, the learning gained from simple day-to-day routines like cooking, eating, cleaning up, and other "world reality tasks" should not be underestimated. All are resources that should be explored and appreciated since they contain the very essence of what preschoolers need to experience before they can tackle the challenges of reading or math and other formal educational activities.

Often it is the unexpected that explodes into knowledge. A catepillar, a store visit, seeing liquids change from solids through baking or freezing--even a sick child--can bring a wealth of facts and new concepts into a child's storehouse of information. This information will be needed when the child is asked to work out an abstract problem in later years. Children cannot have too much real-world experience to prepare them for the world of pencil and paper.

While preschools must set up artificial ways to introduce children to "community helpers," or cooking, or stores, family day care children are generally exposed to these and other natural parts of real life every day. Field trips, errands, and interactions with other children and adults such as mail carriers, cashiers, and neighbors help preschoolers develop a sense of being at home in the world.

Best of all, children can help adults learn as well. Children notice things and have a natural curiosity that spills over into everything they do, everywhere they go. Caregivers are in an ideal position to tune into the interests and concerns of their particular children and explore the world together. The resulting growth and development gained is rarely limited to the children!

MEETING THE NEEDS OF SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN

Donna Kessler
Anne Nickerson

School-age children usually do not need the kind of intense interaction with adults that younger children require. They are working on independence from adults, developing social skills that link them with peers and learning to plan their own time schedules which balance responsibilities with play. However, as with all children, school-age children need the security and guidance of a warm, loving adult who can work with children and their parents to enhance individual development during the hours before and after school.

These children also need a safe, healthy setting which provides places for quiet homework as well as for loud, active play. They need a predictable but flexible environment that encourages rather than stifles their natural urges to move beyond the confines of continuous adult supervision and direction.

Ann Nickerson began her presentation with an overview of past, present and future states of care for school-age children and offered several models of after-school care. The emphasis was on flexibility and a variety of options to meet the needs of the greatest number of parents and children. Once again, family day care was offered as one of the best all-around programs for school-age children.

In the past, one parent--usually the mother--did not work and could be at home when the children came home from school. Children only rarely needed additional care arrangements, and when they did, there was usually a relative or neighbor or friend nearby who could take the child. If not, the child stayed home alone for the short while necessary. After school, time was generally spent on homework, chores, and lots of unstructured play with neighborhood children.

Over the years, mothers of school-age children have taken jobs which keep them away from home long after school is out. The need for school-age care is becoming larger every year. At this time, over 50 percent of the mothers of school-age children are working, and the percentage is steadily increasing. Many parents make arrangements with neighbors or day care centers to drive children to and from school, and to care for

them until the parents return from work. However, two million children between the ages of seven and thirteen are left to care for themselves, unsupervised and alone every afternoon until the parents get home.

Some parents are forced to leave children on their own because they can't afford to pay for care or because care is not available in their area. These children are referred to as "latchkey" children. They are becoming the subject of much concern as their numbers grow.

In some areas, communities, schools and local industry are working together to provide more creative after-school opportunities for children of working parents. There are also some family day care homes and a few center programs that deal primarily with school-age children rather than squeezing them into programs designed primarily for preschool children. An even greater effort to provide care for school-age children will be needed in the very near future.

By 1993, there will be 10.4 million children in need of after-school care. At the same time, there will be a decrease in federal funds to support day care programs on all economic levels. This calls for present-time awareness and planning to avoid a crisis in the next decade. Ms. Nickerson encouraged the group to consider family day care homes as one solution. They could be developed in satellite groupings in connection with schools, day care centers, and parent work-sites, and could be especially suited to school-age children and their parents.

One such program already exists in Reston, Virginia. It is the Children's Center. Donna Kesler, the program's associate director, presented an overview of this unique parent-owned day care center facility. Parents are encouraged to participate in the program and to be active in a variety of work sessions and fund-raising projects throughout the year. Home, school, and the family day care network are committed to working together in Reston to provide high quality care and to meet the individual needs of the school-age children they serve.

Home providers are trained and given regular opportunities to continue their development as child care professionals. The satellite system provides a natural mechanism for support and sharing among caregivers. A further advantage of this network is that the center is a readily available resource for a variety of services. Caregivers are welcome

to participate in the monthly planning sessions.

The satellite home system was developed to give school-age children more opportunities to develop independence and responsibility in smaller, less structured settings than a center can offer. Reston Children's Center was particularly interested in creating a program that allowed children to remain in their own neighborhoods and to be involved in area activities as much as possible. The results after four years of operation have been rewarding to all.

This coordinated effort has its advantages. It has small groupings with the support of a larger system. Fees are paid to the center, and since providers are employees of the center, they are relieved of the hassles of collecting money. Parent fees are standardized. Policies are developed by the center and are more easily enforced with the backing of so many others. Best of all, the co-op aspect of this program involves parents from the very beginning. Everyone in the program feels a part of the cooperative effort to provide children with the best possible care.

Providers can offer children the opportunity to become involved in neighborhood activities. For example, Scouting, sports, and other neighborhood group activities are usually unavailable to children who are cared for in centers or who are at home alone without transportation or motivation to get involved. A sensitive caregiver can open a variety of opportunities to the children in care.

Children in family day care before and after school can develop the kinds of routines that would be similar to those they might have in their own homes. The caregiver is available to discuss the day's ups and downs, offer a snack, give each child the support and space needed to learn to divide his or her time between responsibilities such as homework and other activities such as fun with friends. After the tight routine of an average school day, children need the home-style, small group environment family day care homes quite naturally provide.

Ms. Nickerson outlined the five models of care for school-age children which she has been studying in her research project. Together, they cover a broad range of possibilities that come closest to meeting the needs of the greatest number of working parents and their children. Family day

care seems to offer the best variety of options for care, but Ms. Nickerson expressed concern about programs that offer only one kind of arrangement. Rather than trying to find one form of care that will meet many needs, advocates of quality child care should nurture a variety of choices in an attempt to match care with every possible need for the future.
The five models included:

1. Independent placements in family day care or in day care centers.
2. Placements which are coordinated by a community agency.
3. Public school extended day program placements
4. Industry-developed child care.
5. A coordinated effort of the community, schools and area industries.

An efficient plan for the future may be to use resources that already exist to offer as many kinds of child care as can be imagined, concentrate on improving the quality of each, and leave the decision of what works best in the hands of each family.

MEETING THE NEEDS OF EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

Judy Calder
Carol Uecker

Carol Uecker introduced conference participants to the needs of special children by sharing her own experience in finding a child care arrangement for the two children in her life. Though only one was handicapped, each had his own list of special needs that required the special attention of a provider. Both children needed a flexible caregiver to care for them in ways that would help them grow and develop. Each needed the kind of special nurturing usually found in family day care homes.

Handicapped children are children first. Like all children, they need love, acceptance, and a sensitive adult who can see through the handicap to the child. Anyone who has been around a disabled child long enough to work through the initial feelings of fear and pity and discomfort knows that the rewards are worth the effort. Handicapped children are a part of the world. They are a challenge but they offer a special reward to all who dare get close enough to love them.

Special children need caregivers who are willing to grow and learn, who are willing to ask questions, to find out what a child's disability means in terms of care and how it will affect other children in the home. Interested providers must take all these things into consideration, give the matter some serious thought and then, once again, look through the exceptional needs and reach out to the child who is often hidden in the midst of those needs. Those who take on the job are rarely sorry. There is a lot to be learned from the unique way special children approach the world.

Ms. Uecker pointed out that parents of exceptional children come with special needs, too. Caregivers can often help these parents as they work through the states of adjusting to the reality of having a disabled child: denial, fear, guilt, anger, sorrow, adaption, adjustment. Caregivers who are familiar with these stages can accept and understand as parents struggle toward adjustment. The process is never easy, but acceptance and understanding do foster growth and security, and caregivers are already good at providing these things. Ms. Uecker encouraged providers to accept the challenge of caring for handicapped children.

Judy Calder of the BANANAS Child Care Referral Service in Oakland, California, listed some other advantages family day care providers have in meeting the needs of special children and their families. For example, caregivers can offer flexible hours and can adapt to any special program that a handicapped child might need. The informal family setting allows time for parents to express their feelings and to foster a warm, understanding relationship between the parents and the provider. The home atmosphere encourages the parents and the child to be a part of an extended family, which is perhaps very important to handicapped children and their parents.

Family day care providers can also care for siblings of exceptional children, for the home is a natural setting for siblings to learn about each other and to develop non-pressured, caring relationships. Being around brothers and sisters and other non-disabled children helps the exceptional child develop skills of daily living and play in a normal, homey setting. This kind of interaction is also good for the other children, since close contact with a disabled child can help them develop empathy and can allow them

to work through the curiosity and pity stages at an early age.

Providers who work with exceptional children find that the experience is good for them, too. There are many opportunities for insight and self-growth as caregivers work through the necessary considerations of caring for a disabled child.

Ms. Uecker pointed out that fear is a common reaction of providers when they first offer care to an exceptional child. She advised taking a deep breath and a short break when apprehensions seem overwhelming. "Sit down, take stock, let that old inner confidence return, and begin to adapt to the child's special needs," she advises. Look for signs that the child needs help in adapting. The signs are frustration, screaming, destroying, picking on others, isolation (either self-imposed or set up by others), and doing very little alone (parents, caregiver and children all jumping up to help all the time.)

When things start breaking down because of poor adaptation either by the caregiver or by the child, it is time to make changes, to allow acceptance and learning to take place for all involved. Be creative. Get the other children involved. Find ways to move beyond the fear and frustration by understanding the causes and then taking action. Find out what is causing a problem and make necessary changes. Encourage the other children to include the special child.

As with all groups mentioned previously, parents and children work more smoothly with a caregiver when expectations and concerns are clearly understood before care begins. This sharing is particularly important with exceptional children since each child has a unique set of needs, abilities, and routines. The more a provider knows about the child's strengths, weaknesses, likes, dislikes, self-help skills, communication abilities, past experiences, and special needs, the easier it will be for her to help all involved, including herself, to adapt.

The opportunity for close relationships and the flexibility to adapt the care to each child's special needs often make family day care a parent's first choice of care for a disabled child. Schools and other institutions may be able to offer the child opportunities to get help from professionals, but few can duplicate the one-to-one care and time that a family day care provider can give.

If a caregiver is willing to open her home to an exceptional child, she will quickly find that she is not alone. She will become part of a team made up of the child, the child's parents, the pediatrician, teachers, and specialists who are already involved in the child's life. They will be eager to help and welcome the caregiver into the special world of each special child.

MEETING THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN IN DANGER OF NEGLECT AND ABUSE

Mabel Pitts

Mabel Pitts discussed neglected and abused children and the ways caregivers can help parents and children grow beyond the tragic lives they have been leading. Ms. Pitts informed participants that there is more neglect and abuse than anyone can imagine, and that it often occurs where it would be least expected.

At least two million children have been identified as victims of physical abuse, and there are certainly many more. Children who are emotionally abused, sexually abused, or neglected are even harder to count since their scars are less easy to detect. A statistic of two million barely touches the reality of this horror. Experts feel that the number increases yearly.

There are all kinds of circumstances and problems that can trigger abuse and neglect of children. It is not limited by any means to poor children, but a low-level income does create frustrations and feelings of helplessness that can drive adults to this very private crime.

In some cases, parents are unaware of--or unable to use--quality parenting skills in their families, and they end up repeating the patterns of behavior that have been passed down through generations.

There is a very fine line between abuse or neglect and poor quality parenting in this society. Some people are simply unaware that their behavior with their children has crossed the line, since some forms of physical punishment have always been considered acceptable and even desirable.

Some parents find that moving frequently has left them without emotional and social supports to help work through even simple every-day problems. These frustrations are then taken out on the most convenient victims--their

children. Still others find that their particular life situation is so stressing that they lose control over themselves. Or they are so busy they have no energy left to devote to their children.

Researchers are beginning to identify specific causes of abuse and neglect and are trying to produce more concrete definitions of these behaviors. They are making progress in identifying and predicting potentially abusive families, and things are improving. Every state now has laws that require citizens to report child abuse or neglect. Although many people are still reluctant to get involved, reports are steadily increasing. As publicity campaigns and facts about this problem become more widespread, the general public is becoming aware that only the action of concerned citizens will stop the chain of violence and neglect of children.

Ms. Pitts observed that family day care providers can often help inspire and motivate necessary behavior changes in the troubled families they serve. Providers can demonstrate quality parenting skills and develop important sharing relationships with parents who are often desperate for a friend. Many caregivers work with agencies that can provide training on dealing with the special problems of these children and their parents. More providers are needed, and more providers need training.

Caregivers are in a much better position than social workers with heavy case loads to offer parents the kind of acceptance and nurturing they need to develop new ways of relating to their children. Frequent uprooting leaves a parent virtually alone in the world; for many, the caregiver is the only person with enough time to establish a real relationship with a lonely parent. She may be able to help the parent establish a network of support with neighbors and parents of other children in care. All are necessary steps in laying a foundation of human dignity needed to work on the problems that are causing the neglect or abuse.

Unfortunately, caregivers willing to take on these tasks are not easy to find. Along with the energy devoted to children, caregivers must find ways to meet the needs of the parents as well. Abused or neglected children need lots of time and persistence to help them learn to trust a caregiver enough to develop a loving relationship. They need a safe, predictable environment and an extra dose of sensitivity from a nurturing adult to help heal the scars of their violent past.

Those who do take on the job of working with troubled children and their families are often the targets for severe stress. Family day care providers need help from agencies and other professionals in dealing with the special problems of their troubled clients. They also need peer support groups, opportunities for further training, and a coordinated base of professionals to go to for consultation and direction. These resources could help caregivers avoid overreacting to signs of child abuse. Misunderstandings and lack of information often cause providers to see abuse when there is none. The line that defines abuse and neglect is often fuzzy, and some forms of child abuse are difficult to detect, even by those who care for the child daily.

Many community agencies are working to educate the public and to provide caregivers with the resources they need to be of real help to their clients. Home providers are better educated, more receptive to training, and more interested in learning about neglect and abuse than anyone ever expected.

Unfortunately, some providers are taken advantage of or misused by protective services and other agencies. Participants in the workshop shared frustrations over systems that tend to force children into care by not giving providers the option of turning down cases they may find too difficult. More communication and more sensitive policies are needed if caregivers are to be expected to stay with an agency any length of time.

As these and other concerns were shared in the workshop, excitement grew. Very little is known at this time about what is happening where for children of abuse and neglect. The chance to exchange ideas, discuss problems, and find a few solutions within the workshop emphasized two major facts about this subject: there are many problems common to all who are attempting to aid troubled children in family day care home settings; and some solutions are being found through trial-and-error methods, often in unique ways such as taking teen-age parents directly into a caregiver's home so that they may see quality parenting firsthand; or by sending specially trained homemakers into the homes of abusive parents to give support as well as to model parenting skills.

Providers voiced their appreciation that, with opportunities to pool information and brainstorm about possibilities, the entire field is able to make giant strides not only in coping with the effects of abuse and

neglect, but also in minimizing occurrences as well.

(Editor's note: Providers who are interested in learning more about what to do if they suspect a child in their care is being abused may want to write for these publications:

The Family Day Care Provider's Legal Handbook
by Lujuana Wolfe Treadwell, Attorney at Law,
BANANAS Child Care Project
6501 Telegraph Avenue
Oakland, California 94609

Price $6.00

Although this publication gives information on the laws of California, providers can use the information to request help from similar child care protection agencies in their own states, cities and counties.

Family Day Care as a Child Protection Service
Child Care Support Center, Save the Children
1182 West Peachtree Street, N.E., Suite 209
Atlanta, Georgia 30309

Price: $4.00

This publication explains what "child protection service" is, and is helpful to providers who have been asked by a child protection agency to care for an abused child.

Interested providers may also want to ask child care protection agencies in their states, cities and counties for literature on the abused child.)

DEALING WITH PROBLEMS COMMON TO FAMILY DAY CARE HOME PROVIDERS

As mentioned in previous sections, the job of providing care in family day care homes has some built-in problems that provider support groups are only beginning to identify and work on.

This conference offered workshops dealing with four of these topics: legal rights and responsibilities of providers, overcoming feelings of isolation when caring for children, parent/provider communications, and promoting child health in family day care. The subject of self-esteem was dealt with in a variety of ways through the entire conference. In many ways, the conference itself was an attempt to raise the self-esteem of all who are involved in family day care.

'EGAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PROVIDERS

Lujuana Wolfe Treadwell

There is no way around the fact that if something serious happens to a child in a provider's care, the provider stands a good chance of being sued. This is a sobering realization for any caregiver, even if she has already taken many of the precautions Ms. Treadwell discussed in the workshop session. Needless to say, home-based child care, or any kind of child care, is a tremendous responsibility.

As an attorney, Ms. Treadwell is most familiar with the kind of problems which can result from overly casual arrangements. She urged caregivers to create a business-like tone at the first meeting with parents and try to discover potential problems before a child enters care. She also stressed the importance of clear, written policies, contracts, emergency medical information, and records of daily incidents, especially if an accident occurs. Be aware and take precautions in advance.

Though written agreements may seem overly formal with the kind of informal relationships that occur between caregivers and parents in family day care homes, they may save everyone a lot of concern if problems arise. A written record simply helps everyone remember what kind of hours, charges, food, rules and other considerations have been agreed upon on both sides. The goal is to avoid conflicts and misunderstandings and to help everyone share mutual expectations before guilt or anger or frustrations limit clear communication. It is always easier to discuss a problem before it occurs; furthermore, advance discussion often helps everyone involved avoid potential trouble spots.

Occasional exceptions to agreements might be necessary, but Ms. Treadwell recommended that providers try to limit policy changes as much as possible. Firm expectations on both sides set up a more business-like relationship and help providers avoid frequent demands for unnecessary disruptions in the way services are provided. It is good to review rules regularly and to consider revising contracts if exceptions seem to be more and more needed over time.

Although providers often shy away from written contracts, they can be invaluable in the event of a conflict. Parents tend to take agreements more seriously if they sign something and are more likely to bring up their

own wishes and concerns if they have something from which to work. Contracts also help keep payments reguiar and on time; and delinquent payments are quickly collected by a note reminding parents of their contractual agreement. It works!

A waiver of liabiiity is another form caregivers use to help parents be aware of potential problems. Although they cannot really prevent parents from sueing, the fact that they signed a waiver may keep them from overreacting in the event of an accident. Also, lawyers tend to take waivers into account before taking a case. Waivers show that parents made an informed choice for child care and had confidence in the caregiver's ability to provide a safe environment when the waiver was signed.

Ms. Treadwell said that as long as the caregiver is not shown to be negligent, she will rarely be held liable in an unavoidable accident. All she can do is be as conscientious as possible and hope for the best.

The only sure protection against liability, of course, is insurance. Companies in California and in a few other states have begun offering special home policies that cover caregivers for up to $10,000.

Providers should check their policies, especially in car insurance. Some only protect family members or have other clauses which would make it hard for caregivers to collect if they are involved in an accident with children.

Accidents do happen--even in the safest environments. For this reason, Ms. Treadwell encouraged providers to require a note from parents which gives permission for emergency medical treatment so the child will not have to wait for care. Several workshop participants cautioned others to check with the hospital they would use to make sure their note is acceptable and to take it along on field trips and errands--even if walking.

Participants further reminded each other about the importance of having written permission to give medicines to children when they are sick. Another good protection is to keep written records of what was given, when, and why. These comments inspired several participants to share the kinds of rules they keep about medicine in their

day care homes:

> "I will not give medicine if parents ask me to use another child's prescription or a dosage that is different from the bottle. Also, it has to be a current date. Otherwise, I insist that they bring a note from their doctor if they want me to give it."
>
> "I never give the first dose of medicine. I let parents do that themselves and wait a while before they leave in case there is a reaction."
>
> "There are so many new medicines out now that can be given six to eight hours apart. We request that parents ask their doctors to prescribe these when possible to minimize the risks caregivers must take to give medicines."

Whatever the rules about medicines in a family day care home, it is best to be clear with parents about what they are in advance, preferably in writing.

Excited discussions about the various legal issues limited the number of topics Ms. Treadwell was hoping to cover. Near the end of the session, she mentioned several vital points about child abuse and child custody arrangement problems.

> Abuse: "More needs to be known about abuse and its signs. When parents are accused of abuse, they will accuse everyone and anyone else. Therefore, suspects must be reported, because if caregivers don't report parents, they may get blamed themselves if parents are reported by someone else."
>
> Custody Problems: "It is an impossible situation when a caregiver finds herslef in the middle. Do not agree to take a child if one parent is trying to keep the child from the other parent. The caregiver has no legal right to keep a child from a natural parent. Agree to call the first parent if the other parent appears, but do not guarantee anything. Be sympathetic and try to de-emotionalize the situation. Try not to take sides."

Ms. Treadwell closed her workshop with a report on a case she is working on in California. The case involves a provider and an association who are sueing the state of California because they feel that unannounced licensing visits are unconstitutional. They are trying to make visits contingent on complaints or other specific reasons, because they believe that the privacy of home providers has been violated in the past. Licensing workers have alledgedly made visits according to their own

convenience rather than at regular intervals. This gave some providers more unannounced visits than seemed appropriate, while others were visited only rarely.

Since family day care involves private homes, the matter is quite complex. How much does licensing make a residence into a business? Appeals are expected. However, California may stop licensing family day care because of budget cuts. If this happens, all will have been wasted effort.

The comments inspired by Ms. Treadwell's description of this case showed that divided feelings caused by this issue were not limited to the state of California. At one point, a provider from Georgia voiced the opinion that when people open their homes to business, they open their homes to the public. "My house is open from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., and anyone is welcome," she declared amid a buzz of mixed reactions.

Another participant shared the fact that food visitors in her state are required to call before visiting. This does respect privacy, but it makes monitoring hard. Still another participant emphasized that she heartily agreed with the lawsuit. She felt that people should be trusted to do what's right, and that action should be directed against those who don't do what's right. The excited conversation among the participants showed that this is a subject of great interest among child care providers.

OVERCOMING FEELINGS OF ISOLATION WHEN CARING FOR CHILDREN

Susan Johnson

Anyone who has ever cared for children at home, alone, knows how isolating it can be, especially if they have had more than two children at one time. The word "isolation" comes from a Latin word meaning "island." Susan Johnson in the workshop on isolation, described a family day care provider as "an island with children."

In a random survey of 100 family day care providers in Minnesota and Wisconsin, 63 percent of those surveyed considered isolation to be an area of major concern. All but four indicated that they would like to have workshops on coping with isolation and its related problems. Since this survey included providers living in rural, suburban, and urban areas,

the problem seems to be common to all involved in home caregiving. Workshop participants heartily agreed. When they were divided into groups according to rural, urban, and suburban areas, the same kinds of problems associated with isolation came up again and again:

> "Caregivers have no chances to share ideas or problems."
>
> "There are no adults to converse with and no time available to see people during the day, unless the kids can come."
>
> "The job tends to diminish self-motivation; it offers little stimulation and no upward mobility in the profession."
>
> "There is very little outside support for the choice of profession, little appreciation from anyone, low self-esteem, and neighbors and friends often limit involvement because of 'all those kids running around'."
>
> "Caregivers experience a loss of mobility because of high insurance risks and costs involved. For example, buying three to six car seats is expensive, and you are not motivated to go anywhere when you have to buckle everybody in."
>
> "The field is so absorbing that caregivers lose touch with world issues and find it hard to talk with non-caregiver adults."
>
> "Because outside support systems are rarely accessible, the build-up of stress, resentment toward inconsiderate parents, and other job-related frustrations generally go unresolved. Caregivers find themselves taking things out on their own families."

This is just the tip of the iceberg, according to Ms. Johnson. At times, problems may seem to outweigh the benefits of providing care of children at home. As caregivers become more organized, they are finding more chances to speak up about the problems and concerns they share. Airing these frustrations is a necessary step toward finding solutions and removing the barriers that have kept providers quiet for so long.

When participants and survey respondents were asked to brainstorm about ways to cope with isolation and related problems, ideas centered on three major areas:

1. Find others. Develop a network of providers and neighbors with small children and gather regularly with the children for lunch, play, coffee break/snack times and the like. Go on field trips together. Give each other short breaks now and then. Share ideas and solve problems together. Support each other. Meet during the evening regularly for rap sessions. Invite speakers and go to workshops together.

2. Take time for yourself. Organize your day and vary the routine to give yourself some space. Plan things that you can look forward to doing with the children. Do things in the evenings that do not involve day care; nurture friendships with non-day care people. Take a day off now and then and take a regular vacation to regenerate. Make the effort to do something stimulating during each day. Work on a hobby, read a book, exercise--something special while the children are resting. Hire a helper. Develop a sick-day plan in advance.

3. Organize. Join a professional day care association. Get involved in the larger picture; attend conferences. Get on child advocate mailing lists; subscribe to professional magazines or newsletters. Participate in training workshops. Encourage local agencies or colleges to offer training; help plan some yourself.

Although all solutions mentioned require the kind of self-motivation the job itself often whittles away, this workshop seemed to be quite an inducement for all who joined in to go home and tackle isolation in their own situations. The small group sharing and interactions encouraged by Ms. Johnson during the session brought home several points:

> Caregivers are great talkers and come to any group with a wealth of experience and ideas.
>
> Contact with others may not only diminish isolation, but may also raise self-esteem and provide endless support and inspiration.
>
> Although the problems involved in home care seem overwhelming at times, solutions are being discovered, tested, and shared through conferences, newsletters, and all kinds of support groups which providers are organizing everywhere. They are building bridges between the islands.

PARENT/PROVIDER COMMUNICATIONS

Suzanne Warne

Some of the most complicated problems caregivers experience involve communication breakdowns with parents. Often no one realizes that a misunderstanding has occurred until problems begin to cause increasing frustration and confusion on both sides. Fortunately, there is a lot providers can do to encourage good communication and minimize the potential for mistaken expectations between parent and provider before the child

enters care. An experienced provider quickly learns what needs to be said and what needs to be written down to keep things running smoothly from week to week.

Suzanne Warne reminded participants in the workshop that it is the caregiver's job to set the tone of the family day care home. It is important that providers be clear about expectations from the beginning and that they encourage parents to share their wishes regularly. Many providers insist on a preliminary interview to establish a rapport with each other; to discuss child-rearing philosophies, lifestyles and values; and to decide together if there is a workable match between homes. If conflicts arise, it is vital for both parties to come to an agreeable compromise in advance. If this is not possible, it is probably better if the parents look elsewhere for child care.

Caring for someone else's child is a complicated matter. Parents (especially mothers) often have mixed emotions about leaving their children with someone else all day. They may feel guilty or jealous, and frequently experience anxiety about the well-being of their children, even in the best care situations. Parents who work by choice may feel conflict over their desire to work since it means leaving their children with others. Those who must work may feel angry and frustrated by their fate in life if they would rather be at home with their children.

These pent-up or hidden emotions can cause additional communication problems between caregivers and parents, especially if a parent is unaware of or unable to express these feelings aloud. Caregivers also may experience some confusing emotions if they allow themselves to get too close to a child or find that they do not approve of the way parents handle their children. In either case, one adult may be subjected to needless complaints, disagreements about minor points, overprotection of the child involved, or unnecessary complaints with no apparent cause for this unreasonable behavior if nothing is done to initiate and maintain good communication.

More often than not, sensitivity to these potential problems, clearly written policies, and a chance to discuss mutual expectations regularly can help bring emotions to the surface and direct them into constructive forms before they appear in the form of unsatisfiable demands. Parents may be unaware of the many details involved in developing harmonious child

care between two households. They may need help recognizing the importance of sharing their preferences and expectations with the caregiver before surprises have a chance to happen. An informed caregiver can initiate conversations and make sure that certain areas are covered and agreed upon before a commitment is made. The fewer the surprises, the easier it will be to work them out when they do come up.

Studies show that parents most frequently look for stable, dependable, loving care for their children along with educational experiences and opportunities for learning. Parents often feel unsure of their choice of care and would appreciate a professional approach on the part of a caregiver who can help them see how she will meet these important needs for love and learning. It may help to put together a portfolio which would include a typical daily schedule, menus, references, emergency plans, back-up care in case of illness, house rules, vacations, discipline philosophies and business forms (contract or mutual agreement, hours, pay, liability waiver, medical emergency permission for treatment, etc.).

Ms. Warne shared some pointers to remember when talking with parents to help insure clear communication:

> Be prepared to discuss problems, explain reasons, and work together on possible solutions. Be positive. Be willing to negotiate and compromise, but be clear about personal limits and needs as well.
>
> Get parents involved in day-to-day decisions. Talk with them frequently. Take the initiative and start conversations. Don't wait until there is a problem to try to develop rapport with parents.
>
> Ask for advice or suggestions regularly; request materials which parents may have access to. Ask for old toys they may have. Inspire them to keep an eye out for useful items. Make them feel like a part of a caregiving team.
>
> Learn to <u>listen</u>.
>
> Stick to the issue when there is a problem. Use "I" statements rather than "you" statements. For example, "I feel worried..." is better than "You worried me..."
>
> Remember that the final responsibility for the child rests with the parents. Don't compete. Love the child, but not too much. Respect the parent's place in the child's life.

There is a fine line between business and friendship in family day care. While a lack of communication can cause misunderstanding, too much closeness can cause an unhealthy dependency between parents and caregivers. It is a good habit to regularly step back, take a deep breath, and assess each relationship to determine whether or not the direction is a positive and healthy one.

Family day care can be an ideal support system for all involved, but limits are necessary. Only experience and sensitive awareness can help caregivers discover the appropriate balance between loving care and professional distance. On-going communication is the best way for everyone to keep things in perspective. When caregivers make it a point to develop and use good communication skills, everyone gains.

PROMOTING HEALTH IN FAMILY DAY CARE

Judy Calder

Sickenss is unavoidable, especially in children. However, advance planning and conscientious health practices can minimize the effects of germs on a family day care home. Although family day care homes do have fewer children and therefore fewer instances of illness than large centers or schools, sick children cause a chain reaction of special problems even in the smallest of settings.

When a child gets sick, he or she may need to be isolated or kept quiet, but will still need supervision. Other children may require special precautions to keep them from getting the same illness. Parents of other children in the home may need to be warned of the exposure to contagious germs. The parent of the sick child may have to take off work to take the child to the doctor or home for quiet rest. This often involves missing more work or finding alternative care while the child is recovering. The end result may be that the provider gets sick as well--much to everyone's horror. Obviously, provisions for illness are a must for all involved.

The workshop on health in family day care was coordinated by Judy Calder of BANANAS Child Care Project. Participants discussed the ways people in their areas are coping with the dilemma sickness brings on in child care situations. In all cases, clarity of policies was given as one of the prime

considerations for all involved. Parents need to be aware of what is expected of them in the event their children or the caregiver become ill, and they need this information well ahead of time, preferably before their children enter care.

Some providers are willing to care for sick children; others are not. Some will make sure that a substitute will cover for child care if the caregiver is ill; others expect parents to make alternative arrangements. Many providers keep lists of substitutes for themselves and for parents with sick children. Some good possible resources mentioned included retired providers, foster grandparents programs, neighbors, and local child development programs. One provider hired a substitute and then went to a neighbor's house to get well. It was the simplest solution. Illness in family day care demands flexibility from all involved--and creativity, too.

In California, CETA-funded satellite homes for sick care are being tested. One provider in a cluster is designated as the "sick-child" provider, and also acts as a substitute or a resource person when all are healthy. Another idea that seems to work is the development of "sick bays" at the parent's worksite. Parents can still come to work, though they may not put in as busy a day as they might have, and can still take care of their sick children without missing an entire day of work.

Of course, the optimum arrangement is to keep everyone as healthy as possible. Preventive child health practices include documented immunizations, regular check-ups for every child, and careful sanitation and health habits in the day care home. Health habits such as keeping hands clean when preparing food, covering the mouth when coughing or sneezing; and blowing noses regularly, etc., can be shared with the children as part of an informal curriculum on a day-to-day basis. An accurate, working knowledge of childhood diseases and first aid are also invaluable information for a caregiver to have to help her spot symptoms quickly and minimize problems for all.

As the field of family day care homes grows, the problems caused by illness are becoming better understood and the sharing of workable solutions more widespread. Many participants agreed that the most exciting part of this workshop was the opportunity to hear what was

going on in other parts of the country and to brainstorm together on options in sick care.

CONCLUSION: THE FAMILY DAY CARE PROVIDER AS A CAREGIVER

After a complete look at the job of providing care for children at home and the kinds of problems professional nurturers cope with every day, it is clear that they do in fact deserve the title of "caregiver." Only people who are personally dedicated to the concept of serving others could go on providing care in a society which puts little importance on the job of raising children.

The conference was presented in the same spirit of loving acceptance that presentors pointed to again and again as the biggest attraction of family day care. The needs of a wide variety of people on varying levels of expertise were met with ease because of the flexibility and sensitivity apparent in every workshop and talk. Providers who had never been to a conference before mixed with long-term agency support professionals in a number of sessions. Everyone seemed to come away with something new or special: information, motivation, someone to share ideas with, a resource person who can be called on next year. Like in a family day care home, there was something for everybody.

Everyone was treated with great respect for sharing of experiences, regardless of background. There was even a bit of an extended family feeling since one kind mother brought and shared her toddler with all who cared to sit in the back with them. He drew quite a crowd of regular admirers. Caregivers are rarely off duty!

Family day care still has a long way to go before it is able to meet the needs of all involved and to offer caregivers the incentives that other professions offer to stay in the field. With this in mind, it obviously takes a very special kind of person to take on the tremendous responsibility of providing care for other peoples' children in a homey, loving environment. Whether they are involved for a year or for a lifetime, caregivers are making a significant contribution to the world of the future. It's about time they started telling each other so!

PART II

THE FAMILY DAY CARE PROVIDER AS A LEADER

By
June Rogers

THE PROVIDER AS A LEADER

INTRODUCTION

More clearly than any word spoken or bit of wisdom shared, the presence of family day care providers themselves, as workshop coordinators and participants, testified to their growing self-esteem, their strength as leaders and advocates in their communities and among their peers, and as articulate, competent, dedicated, professional providers of care for young children.

Four workshops were grouped under the topic, "The Family Day Care Provider as a Leader." They are: Making Family Day Care Strong in the Community; Working with Legislators and Other Decision-Makers; When Providers Serve on a Board of Directors; and Career Options for Providers.

This part of the conference report is a summary of those workshops.

MAKING FAMILY DAY CARE STRONG IN THE COMMUNITY

Sandy Swanson

Sandy said it well: "The strength of providers (and their capacity to be leaders) begins with self-esteem. As they feel valued and important, they are able to love the children in their care and recognize their own value and importance."

Many providers and advocates pointed out, however, that there are many obstacles to the recognition and appreciation of family day care in communities across the country. Some of these obstacles are:

Isolation (no fellow employees or colleagues.)

The service is not valued by the community or by parents.

There is little or no understanding by providers of the professional nature of the service.

The consumer's lack of awareness of the business role of the provider.

Little or no recognition by or respect from public officials.

As providers feel better about themselves, are able to demonstrate their skills to parents and others, and are seen as resources for the child care network and the community, they are motivated to take on

leadership positions. How does this happen? As happy, healthy, smiling children leave the day care home day by day, harried, weary parents turn to the providers for advice. As providers turn to each other and to the child care network for training and mutual support, special skills of individual providers are recognized and used. As the community recognizes and observes their skills, providers are seen as important, contributing members of the community.

In one community, the Chamber of Commerce observed (with a little prodding from the provider), the small business aspects of the family day care service. She was listed as an independent business, shared the Chamber benefits of market data, small business seminars, business contacts, and community promotion. Have you ever seen an article extolling the virtues of family day care on the business page of a newspaper? Sandy Swanson says, "It's about time!"

Many in this workshop pointed to the participation in lobbying, in gathering legislative information--they were reminded that information is power--in learning to use bureaucracies to their advantage, as ways to motivate providers to leadership. Jan Yocum, Executive Director of the Washington-based Day Care Council of America, was quoted as saying, "We spend so much of our time talking among ourselves." Participants were urged to think more critically about who needs to be influenced and who can influence others for us. Who should we be talking to? Some suggestions were: business people and merchants, media people, politicians, parents, neighbors, other providers, human service personnel, school systems, industry, advertisers, educators, churches, lawyers, and legal services personnel.

Making family day care strong, then, means recognizing and using the skills of providers and networking as associations and support groups through a variety of community contacts. Workshop participants agreed that support groups do make a difference, build provider confidence, and more support for children in care. Bonnie Tyler and Laura Dittman in the January 1980 National Association for the Education of Young Children Journal expressed it this way: "Only those with their needs met can meet the needs of others."

WORKING WITH LEGISLATORS AND OTHER DECISION-MAKERS

Helen Wimberley
Sophia Harris

Sophia Harris, in the July 1980 Federation Update, said: "In order to be an effective advocate for quality child care, we must be prepared to discuss all important aspects of child care and answer controversial questions put to us by persons who are not knowledgeable about or are hostile toward child care. This means that providers must be familiar with the economic, social, and political considerations related to day care. It goes without saying that we must be thoroughly familiar with the educational and developmental aspects as well."

From Helen Wimberley: "We who are interested in family day care must become involved in government because government affects us....We had better use our influence with the government, because the government is going to use its influence on us. We must become involved, because we can make a difference. As a matter of fact, we have made a difference. We should never forget that we are taxpayers and voters; government workers and elected officials are paid by us."

The two women quoted above are experienced advocates, and they have shared remarkable achievements as lobbyists.

The Tennessee State Association of Family and Group Day Care Providers was able to secure in a seven-month period an increase in pay for subsidized children and the proclamation of Family Day Care Awareness Week by the governor. They pointed to some strategies needed to influence and educate elected officials:

Register to vote.

Know your elected officials.

Build association membership. Refer to this membership when contacting officials.

Arrange for publicity about family day care before approaching officials. Example: Family Day Care Awareness Week.

Prioritize your issues.

Develop letter-writing and home visit campaigns to your legislators. (If a group is writing, vary the letter. Congress pays less attention to what appears to be a group writing effort.)

Most importantly, sell yourself. Let the general public know that family and group day care providers provide:

quality, professional child care

unique benefits to children and their parents

a service to the community and the expectation of being considered in the decision-making that affects them.

With eight days left in the legislative session in the Alabama Legislature, the legislative efforts of the Federation of Child Care Centers of Alabama (FOCAL) triumphed in securing $800,000 for child care (including family day care) through a tax on domestic corporations. How did they do it? With a broad, confident smile, Sophia Harris explained. "It was a sneak attack," she said. The legislation was passed before the opposition realized what was happening. The following carefully planned steps led to their success:

1. Defined the need and the source of the money sought (special tax on domestic corporations).
2. Developed a coalition for support. (Explained the benefits and mutual support of the goal to the community).
3. Developed unity within the Human Resources Agency. (Be sure to have written agreement as to how funds, once secured, will be allocated, and options for "what if's.")
4. Selected a political mentor to help guide the group through the legislative process. (It could be a staff person, but must have easy access to information and provide emotional and psychological support.)
5. Got the bill written by the legislative support unit.
6. Secured a legislator to introduce it, then lined up support: advocates, telephone hook-ups to monitor progress of the bill and to determine when to apply pressure.
7. Knew the committee chairpersons and were prepared to speak at hearings. ("You can't bring enough influence to bear unless you are on a first-name, friendly basis with your legislators!")

Sophia Harris reminded the participants that it is easy in the flush of victory to forget to say Thank You! to your legislators and friends for their support in keeping day care as a first priority. In fact, she urged the importance of "being nice" even when legislators oppose you.

WHEN PROVIDERS SERVE ON A BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Janet Christianson
Lujuana Wolfe Treadwell

Perhaps the most important reason providers want to serve on the boards of organizations that affect their work and welfare is the sense of power and recognition that such a position offers. In addition, providers can channel and interpret their needs to other members, develop allies for lobbying efforts, and learn about and share in the resources offered by other agencies and persons represented on the board.

When Sandy Swanson was a licensed provider, she and others needed cots. The cots were made available at half price through a mini-grant from the Minnesota Day Care Association. She wanted to give something back to the association, so she accepted a term on the board of directors.

Lujuana Wolfe Treadwell urged providers to study the laws governing corporations in their states. A corporation is a "legal person" and allows groups to engage in activities and services without risks as individuals. It is also often called a corporate "veil" or "shield." It is important to be clear about the difference between a for-profit and a not-for-profit corporation. In the latter, all the money earned goes back into program operation.

The success of the Alameda City Family Day Care Association was cited. The association is a not-for-profit group that worked to change zoning laws. As a result of their efforts, the city decreed that providers caring for six or fewer children were not included in zoning regulations. The board of directors, which wisely included a lawyer, several providers and an accountant, initiated the zoning request, got parents to hearings, and wrote newspaper reports. Corporately they accomplished something impossible to do as an individual.

Participants were encouraged to check with their state or city bar association or the state legal aid society for accurate and clear descriptions of the legal responsibilities of a member of a board of directors. There is personal risk as a board member, but risk goes with responsibility and power. It was also noted that family day care associations are often treated with some skepticism by the public because the goals of the association usually further the goals of the providers themselves. Therefore, it is wise to include others who are advocates with special skills (lawyers,

accountants, human service professionals, etc.) as members and in advisory capacities to assure the furtherance of public goals.

CAREER OPTIONS FOR PROVIDERS

Jim Nicholie
Debbie Sgambelluri

> "Providers must gain the perspective of professionalism, be given credit for their expertise, and become a rich source for training."
>
> Debbie Sgambelluri

> "The bulk of society has viewed family day care as a dumping ground for people who are not really employable. 'If you can't get a job, you can always babysit.' Even at this point, the wider society will not readily recognize the skills you may have acquired as a family day care provider. If you are to make the most of these skills, you must learn to identify and articulate them. In short, you must be able to sell yourself."
>
> Jim Nicholie

Though Debbie and Jim, as indicated above, are aware of the harsh realities facing providers who seek career options, both are full of enthusiasm about the possibilities.

There are increasingly expanding career options within the family day care field itself. The most obvious is involvement in training other providers through workshops and classes. There is real personal gain and recognition from helping other providers become more knowledgeable about the administrative and developmental aspects of family day care. Their home is literally their classroom; they work from a reality-based situation.

Debbie told a story about working with a trainer who had a master's degree in nutrition. The woman was overwhelmed by the reality of the world of the provider--the long hours, the lack of respite, the sheer number of things that must be coped with daily. The trainer and the provider learned something from each other.

Providers can be fantastic parent trainers as parents seek child care options appropriate for their children and struggle with developmental problems and questions. Not all providers are quality providers, but if they are good, says Debbie, who better to teach parents, one-on-one, informally, and to be supportive of them?

In some areas there is a higher rate of pay for experienced providers to train apprentices, teenage parents, and who specialize in difficult fields (handicapped, abused, infants). There are some opportunities as well for providers in:

Regulation: licensing, food program directors

Support services: Staff positions in information and referral programs, toy lending libraries, family day care associations.

Administration: Family day care systems, support programs, training programs.

Other forms of child care: Center care, foster care, shelters for abused women and children, nursery schools, religious education.

Related fields: Parent education, family clinics, children's hospitals, park and recreation programs, family camps, teaching high school students about child care, other small businesses, writing family day care materials.

Sounds encouraging, doesn't it? Jim and Debbie and many of the participants were enthusiastic about the possibilities for careers, but they were equally sober about the obstacles.

Perhaps the most difficult fact to swallow is that "day-to-day touching care" is a depressed field economically. Debbie emphasized the importance of keeping providers in the field in direct service, but there is little or no financial incentive to do so. Center care positions are offered as the first career option, but Debbie believes that family day care offers a woman the advantage of management control and independence. Jim emphasized the capacity of family day care to humanize centers. Yet the reality is that the child care salary hierarchy places family day care providers firmly on the bottom. Support staff and regulatory staff all receive better salaries, yet without the providers, support staff would have no jobs.

According to Jim Nicholie, "The very word 'career' implies a job and some sense of movement or progress in that work. The economics of child care, and family day care in particular, is such that there is little economic security or advancement possible. There is little value placed on the care of young children by our economic system."

SUMMARY: THE PROVIDER AS LEADER

Our discussion through these four topics has come full circle. Leadership has many faces. Making family day care strong is being professional but "keeping the warmth of informality and saying what you do well and with confidence."

Developing legislative know-how may include understanding the way our economic system works and doesn't work for child care. Serving on boards and strengthening corporate knowledge and skill may well prepare providers to organize locally, regionally, and nationally for a more secure place in the economic hierarchy of values, and thus assure real career options.

PART III

TRAINING FOR FAMILY DAY CARE PROVIDERS

By
Deb Fish
Rhoda Redleaf

TRAINING FOR FAMILY DAY CARE PROVIDERS

INTRODUCTION

If it is clear that family day care is more in demand than ever before--as this conference indicated--then it is also clear that training will be the dominant concern in issues related to family day care in the 80s. Six conference sessions and one keynote presentation were devoted to training, and they covered everything from techniques to cost per hour. These sessions were all very well attended (30 to 60 participants per session). Considering that the training sessions were often back-to-back with "dollar in the pocket" sessions on the food program, those numbers alone testified to the tremendous interest in training. This is, perhaps the result of several factors:

> The recognition of family day care as the most frequently used form of child care.
>
> Society's awareness and acceptance of the tremendous importance of the early years in a child's overall development.
>
> The realization that this knowledge must be conveyed to those caring for children during the early years.
>
> A growing concern on the part of many social service agencies that family day care providers be recognized as providers of an important service, and that their needs for more supportive services be recognized.

Although the sessions on training focused on a variety of methods and delivery systems, underlying each of these sessions were several critical issues which each session addressed in its own way. One fundamental question faced by all training effort is: How does one train adults in general and day care providers in particular? The experiences and needs of the adults to be trained must be considered, and each session reflected its perception of and approach to that question.

Another issue dealt with questions of efficiency and effectiveness. The use of television as an efficient training medium was underscored by the presentations of two outstanding programs. Concerns related to efficiency and effectiveness will continue to grow as the need for training increases and the availability of funding decreases.

Quality of training was another issue raised in each session. Trainers and training programs will be required to substantiate the impact of training on the quality of care provided. This, of course, brings up evaluation, which was considered within the context of several sessions and in a separate workshop.

Policy issues in training were discussed in several sessions. These often came up in relation to questions from participants, and they revealed a broad range of differences in policies in different parts of the country. Such issues as mandated training, registration, licensing regulations or positions on training and how these were implemented by states, produced interesting and lively discussions in many sessions.

This is a summary of the content of the sessions on training: Helping Skills for Home Visitors, Family Day Care in Rural Areas, Competency-based Training for Family Day Care, How Children Learn/How Adults Learn, Teaching Child Guidance: Some Options for Trainers, Evaluating the Effect of Training Programs, and Using Television in Family Day Care Training.

HELPING SKILLS FOR HOME VISITORS

Bonnie Arnold

Home visits to providers are made for many purposes: monitoring, orientation, training, evaluation, information sharing. Ms. Arnold suggested that the focus of the home visit be kept narrow. When several purposes are addressed in the same visit, the information presented can become confusing and the overall purpose of the visit unclear.

Home visiting for the purpose of training providers is effective for several reasons:

> Family day care providers are generally home-bound and frequently do not have access to training classes.
>
> The individual provider's needs and interests can be assessed and directly addressed. When providers find the information directly related to their needs, they are more likely to apply it to their child care practices.

The home visitor and the provider can use the factual information presented in the home visit as a base for problem solving.

Because the content of the home visit is directly related to the provider's needs, training efficiency is enhanced. Time is generally not wasted on topics that the provider interprets as irrelevant.

As with any training program, the outcome is directly related to the quality of the training provided. This session concentrated on methods for making the home visit effective. A few of the many helpful tips offered:

1. Keep the purpose of the visit narrow.
2. Inform the provider of the purpose and sequence of the visits.
3. Have written objectives for each visit and evaluate its effectiveness immediately following the visit.
4. Know your own values and accept the provider's values. Your purpose is to help the provider explore her values--not to impose your own.
5. Listen to and encourage the provider to express her feelings without judging, interpreting, or telling her what to do.
6. Participate in active problem-solving with the provider.
7. Carry a list of community resources and other reference materials.
8. Help the provider make connections with other providers.
9. Give encouragement and specific feedback. Use "I" messages when you say something critical. Example: "I think the children need a routine nap time every day" instead of: "You should see that the children have a routine nap time every day."
10. Encourage providers to initiate topics of interest to them by asking "Is there anything else you'd like to see?" "Is there anything else you'd like to talk about?"

FAMILY DAY CARE IN RURAL AREAS

Dorothy Pinsky

Ms. Pinsky described a project sponsored by the Cooperative Extension Service of Iowa State University. The primary objectives of this project were:

1. To raise community awareness of the value of quality child care.
2. To identify family day care home providers in at least two communities in each of four counties.
3. To develop training and support programs best suited to improving the quality of care given.

More specific objectives of the program:

1. Design programs to further community awareness of the family day care home provider as more than just a babysitter.
2. Identify persons in the communities who are providing child care services.
3. Develop effective delivery systems and appropriate resources and teaching materials for the individual communities.
4. Develop training for family day care providers that would:

   increase the provider's perception of self as a competent person.

   increase knowledge and skills of the provider in fostering development of children.

   assist the provider in seeing the home as a learning center as well as a caring environment.

   assist providers in developing business procedures relative to family day care.

   assist providers in recognizing resources in the community such as the public library, "Ys," adult education facilities.

   develop a communications system with other providers in the community where this system seems appropriate.

Ms. Pinsky described the difficulties of establishing a training program in a rural area. Identifying who was providing home day care was the first difficulty to overcome since many providers were not registered. Developing a strategy to reach providers who were significant distances apart was another difficulty. For many providers, attending a workshop meant traveling 30 to 40 miles each way.

Four rural counties were chosen as the target area for the project. A media campaign was launched in each county which included newspaper stories about family day care, radio spots and short articles for use in Cooperative Extension home economists' newsletters. At the same time, Extension home economists initiated a major campaign to identify providers in their counties. In addition to media efforts and newspapers, community bulletin boards were monitored for advertisements like "Will babysit in my home." Help in identifying providers was also solicited from Department of Social Service staff, school principals, ministers, and other community leaders. From these efforts, a mailing list of 170 providers was compiled.

With the help of an advisory committee of experienced, trained family day care providers, 12 topics were identified and an indepth newsletter was developed on each topic. These topics included:

Inexpensive toys and equipment
Guidance and discipline.
Home as a learning and caring environment.
Family day care as a business.
Parent-provider relations.
Language development and activities.
Health and safety.
Meals and snacks.
Motor development and activities.
Caring for infants and toddlers.
Emotional and social development.
Children with special needs.

The newsletters were mailed out, one per month, to the providers.

Workshops were held in all four counties, and attendance ranged from zero to five. The group of five participated and shared problems but showed little interest in setting another meeting date.

After nine newsletters were sent out, a telephone evaluation was conducted. From the evaluation, information was collected about the providers, their families and the children in their care. The evaluation assessed the impact of the newsletters, including the usefulness of each topic and its impact on the providers' child care practices, self-esteem, sense of isolation and business practices. Questions were also asked to assess why caregivers had not attended the workshops.

The results of the evaluation substantiated that providers found the newsletters useful, shared them with parents and providers, and saved them for further use. There were many anecdotal comments recorded during the telephone interviews that indicated that providers appreciated receiving materials in their homes and found them helpful and supportive.

Conference participants were impressed with the quality of the newsletters developed by this project. In particular, the colorful, spacious and easy-to-read layout enhanced the effectiveness of these newsletters as a training vehicle. Newsletters are an efficient means of giving information to providers in rural areas where distance prohibits travel to workshops.

Ms. Pinsky encouraged participants to contact the family life specialist in their local Cooperative Extension Bureau. She also described how to order free and inexpensive materials through Cooperative Extension. Participants seemed excited to learn about the services and excellent materials available from this agency.

COMPETENCY-BASED TRAINING FOR FAMILY DAY CARE

Jean Kelly
Mary Lou Gilstad

Ms. Kelly and Ms. Gilstad used the Minnesota Competency-Based Training Assessment Program for Family Day Care as a model for their workshop. The purpose of the project was to develop, implement and refine a training and assessment system for family day care providers. For most participants and observers, the concept of developing a professional and recognizable credential for family day care generates a great deal of enthusiasm. Such a credential can lead to a heightened self-concept on the part of the provider and increased recognition on the part of the public. The home-based and self-study aspects of the credentialing process provide a valuable addition to conventional classes and workshops.

The first step taken by this project was to organize an advisory committee consisting of representatives from local and state family day care organizations, members of the State Department of Public Welfare, members of the family day care licensing staff from several counties, and several family day care providers. With their input and the staff's experience with child development associate training, the system for training and assessing family day care providers was implemented.

Following is a brief summary of the steps taken by a provider in the credentialing process. To date, eight family day care providers in Minnesota have completed the process and received their family day care credential.

Orientation: Providers attend a workshop which provides general information about the concept and process of competency-based training.

Introductory Visit: This is the first visit conducted by the provider's field advisor. At this time, the field advisor conducts a pretraining observation and the provider is asked to conduct a self-appraisal. Based on the observation and self-appraisal, an individualized training plan is developed.

Individualized Training: Providers receive some on-site training from a trainer as part of their preparation for the assessment process. The provider also participates in related training programs offered in the community.

Competency Notebook: During the training process, providers assemble a "competency" notebook that documents their progress and achievements in each of the training areas.

Assessment Team Meeting: When providers feel that they have adequate training and experience and are prepared in all competency areas, the assessment is conducted. The assessment team consists of the field advisor, an independent observer, the provider, and a parent. (If the parent does not attend, he or she fills out a written assessment instead.) The parties share all the information, including a thorough review of the provider's competency notebook. If all members of the assessment team agree that the provider is competent, then the provider receives a "credential of competence," or, if not, additional training is recommended.

The family day care competencies identified by this project are:

- Safety
- Health
- Self-concept
- Social development
- Assistant/substitutes
- Nutrition
- Physical
- Guiding behavior
- Child development
- Home learning environment
- Qualities that promote learning
- Relations with parents

As mentioned initially, the audience was enthusiastic over the potential recognition that the family day care profession could achieve through a credentialing system. They also raised some pertinent questions which warrant further exploration. These include:

> What is the cost per individual for the training and assessment process?
>
> Will there be a comparative study of the difference in level of care between providers who receive the credential and those who do not?
>
> What happens if the provider is not assessed as competent during the assessment meeting?
>
> What is the relationship between this project and the Child Development Associate Consortium?

It is hoped that continued efforts will result in answers to these questions and further validation of the program. If the concept is recognized and accepted, it will provide a valuable system for training, assessing and giving recognition to family day care providers as child care professionals.

HOW CHILDREN LEARN/HOW ADULTS LEARN

Rhoda Redleaf

The premise on which this workshop session was based was that adults as well as children learn by doing and that the principles of learning can be illustrated and better understood through participation in a "learning experience." After a very brief introduction tracing some historical perspectives of how children learn, the group was immediately divided into circles with about eight participants in each group and given a paper bag containing several objects. Instructions were given to the group to

examine the objects and to answer three questions for each object:

What is the object?

How did you decide?

What are your feelings?

The groups were told not to talk to each other and to work independently (an instruction which was not followed for very long). Eventually the groups were told to share the information with each other, and finally the instructor went around to each group and answered their questions about the identity of each of the objects.

The group was then pulled together to discuss what they had just experienced. The groups all preferred working together and sharing rather than working independently and found it very hard not to talk to each other. Participants commented about the giggling and laughing which soon began in the group, which for adults as well as for children occurs to relieve tension.

Throughout the workshop, experiences were designed to simulate the experiences children face each day. The adults behaved much as children would, but with somewhat more inhibition in terms of tasting some of the items (certainly helpful for some in the identification process) and in the ways they manipulated the objects. The group discussed what motivated them to care about the identity of the objects and concluded that it was their involvement in the process and their role of learning from each other as well as from the instructor.

There was still a need for an informed person to give the information necessary to complete the learning at the appropriate time. This exercise paralleled children's motivation from curiosity, their need to explore and experiment, the enjoyment of sharing with peers in the learning process, and their need for information from adults.

The participants were then asked to give their answers to question number two, how they decided what the objects were. The leader listed all the responses, dividing them into separate categories: one for the sensory inputs and one for the organizing and retrieval process involved in learning. From the discussion it was easy for the group to define for itself the learning process and draw parallels between adult's and children's

learning. The group was then asked to list the words used to refer to their feelings. These included a great variety such as frustration, curiosity, feeling dumb, relief when they knew something, boredom with the too familiar, challenge, pleasure, pressure, etc. The participants expressed a tremendous number and range of feelings. The importance of recognizing feelings in both adults and children and their impact on learning became clear.

Ms. Redleaf then summarized many of the points that had been discussed concerning learning, particularly as they related to children's learning:

> All learning is sensory-based.
> Organization processes which are developing during the preschool years are needed to make the information useful.
>
> Good learners tend to be active and curious, to manipulate objects by acting on them in a variety of ways, to have emotions under reasonable control, can settle down and concentrate (because they feel competent) and use adults and peers as resources. In short, they have some information, can use it, retrieve it, and learn how to get more information as they need it.
>
> Children who sit still, don't disturb us, and are still learning are more advanced learners and can deal at a more abstract level. We must be aware of where children are on the learning continuum.

It is helpful for adults to recognize that what children say and do represents their best level of thinking and understanding of something. The mistakes children make reveal how they think. Adults would do well to build on that thinking, and to give explanations to help children make sense out of their experiences. The group discussed the importance of social interaction in the learning process as well. Trainers' understanding of children's learning processes can also be applied to adult learning processes.

Adults also learn when their feelings are engaged, and the final part of the workshop dealt with some suggestions for other experientially-based training techniques. With appropriate techniques, workshops for caregivers can be designed to provide content information and to provide a model of methods which encourage participation and learning in children.

TEACHING CHILD GUIDANCE: SOME OPTIONS FOR TRAINERS

Rhoda Redleaf

Throughout the group exercises and discussions, major consideration was given to understanding the feelings and attitudes of both the trainer and the provider. Ms. Redleaf introduced the topic by stating that it was one of the most difficult to teach because one's attitude toward child guidance is close to the core of one's self and deeply ingrained in one's culture and past experiences. Therefore, for many providers these attitudes come to be closely identified with their self-image. If the trainer rejects the methods of guidance used by the provider (or implies rejection), the provider is apt to feel rejected and turn the trainer and the training off. Trainers whose educational backgrounds are in child development often find it difficult not to let their own biases, attitudes, and expectations show. They may have difficulty responding in an open, non-threatening way to guidance practices that are not generally suggested by child development experts. Hence, trainers of child guidance have a very difficult task to accomplish.

The trainer must first recognize that few individuals are going to change their guidance techniques because a trainer tells them to. People only change when they come to view or understand a situation differently and see that different approaches may be more in keeping with their long-range goals for the child. Effective training sessions on guidance will provide tasks, discussions and exercises that help providers explore their values and goals for children and then plan appropriate techniques. Suggestions and handouts from Ms. Redleaf provided ideas on appropriate exercises. Some of these include:

> Defining the difference between discipline and punishment and then discussing the impact of related techniques on children.
>
> Dividing into pairs and sharing one's most successful experience with a guidance problem and one's least successful experience. Follow up with a discussion of feelings that accompanied these experiences. This exercise was conducted in the conference workshop. Positive feelings tended to be things like: "I really felt I stayed in control--didn't lose my temper." "I was able to distract him and save a lot of conflict that we had had before." Negative feelings tended to be things people did when they felt irritable, out of control, or frustrated. These actions produced very negative responses in children.

Developing a goal chart for children's behavior. Discuss what guidance techniques are most effective in terms of these long-range goals (example: independence, self-esteem).

Solving problems with providers. In these exercises the trainer needs to help the provider identify several possible solutions to choose from, develop a plan to implement, and evaluate why it did or did not work.

A worksheet that lists negative statements that are often made to children. The provider then changes the statements to positive ones. For example, change "Don't throw the sand" to "Keep the sand in the box."

Teaching child guidance is difficult to do without also teaching child development. Some techniques that could be used in a class include discussion of normal development, particularly as it relates to behavior difficulties; or an exercise where six or seven situations with young children are described and the provider or group answers the question, "Is this misbehavior, or...?" These and other suggestions for group discussions and exercises were spelled out in the hand-outs from the workshop leader.

In addition to understanding child development as it relates to guidance, other factors were discussed briefly. These include recognition that each child will react differently to the same technique; understanding the impact of separation or crisis upon children; recognition of the importance of appropriate activities and the impact of the physical environment on behavior.

Conference participants also discussed methods of dealing with individuals who present problems in training groups through non-participation or through forcefully expressing their own views, etc.

In conclusion, Ms. Redleaf discussed many excellent resources and the underlying philosophy of each that trainers could use in preparing to teach guidance.

EVALUATING THE EFFECT OF TRAINING PROGRAMS

Dorothy Pinsky

This session provided an excellent overview of the whole area of evaluation. It dealt with some of the philosophical issues of evaluation as well as the practical "how to" of evaluating a program.

Ms. Pinsky stated, "Evaluation means to examine or judge in order to determine the value of an educational program. The goal of program evaluation is to provide information for enlightened decision-making to help establish or improve programs."

Evaluation is usually a continuing process utilizing information collected both formally and informally before, during, and after a program operation. That information often forms the basis upon which decisions affecting the program and its operation are made. The use of evaluation thus can be for program planning, program improvement, program justification, and program accountability.

In formal evaluation, careful planning is required and consideration must be given to the goals of the program to be evaluated, the goals of the evaluation, whether these goals describe an effort worth doing, and the costs of the evaluation in terms of time and money.

The issues to be addressed in evaluation must relate to the needs, problems, and interests of the audience. Some issues to be examined might be evidence of program outcomes, accountability for program processes and costs, the extent to which the needs were addressed, whether or not the goals were fulfilled, and whether or not program promises were kept.

In deciding which questions to address, attention must be paid to very practical concerns. These questions seem crucial in making any decisions in terms of what to evaluate and when:

Can the results of an evaluation influence decisions regarding the program?

Can the evaluation be completed in time to be helpful to decision-makers?

Can the evaluation be done? Is sufficient data obtainable on the important effects of the program?

Can sufficient resources be obtained to meet the time schedule and technical requirements of the evaluation?

Has the program been stable enough so that an evaluation will provide relevant information?

Is the program significant enough to merit the evaluation effort?

The issues raised in the first half of the workshop were useful in helping trainers face some of the realistic limitations confronting program planners in terms of evaluation and helpful in focusing efforts on what can and should be evaluated.

The second half of the workshop was cogent and directive in terms of evaluation techniques. Ms. Pinsky spelled out precise considerations of what evidence should be collected, how it should be collected, how it should be analyzed and reported.

Evidence is information that contributes to the consideration of an issue addressed by an evaluation. The quality of evidence is assessed by considering many factors such as relevance, validity, reliability, balance and scope, etc., which in turn are related to the ways in which that information is collected. Ms. Pinsky offers a useful rule of thumb in suggesting that only data needed to assess the issue in question be collected and the evaluator forego the temptation to collect all those things that would be "nice to know." Some data-gathering techniques include mailed or distributed questionnaires, distributed checklists, telephone surveys, personal or telephone interviews, direct observation. Several factors to consider in determining which techniques to use were discussed along with some things to consider in developing one's questionnaire or other evaluation instrument. Several evaluation references were recommended, including the following:

Dillman, Dor. *Mail and Telephone Surveys--A Total Design Method,* John Wiley and Sons, New York, 1978.

Morris, Lynn Lyons and Carol Taylor Fitzgibbon, *Program Evaluation Kit,* Sage Publications, Beverly Hills, CA., 1978.

USING TELEVISION IN FAMILY DAY CARE TRAINING

Ann Jo Haynes
Lucy Jones

The two programs demonstrated were *A Spoonful of Loving* and *Family Day Care--A Full-Time Job.* These two sessions showed participants the rationale for and the process of developing television training films for family day care providers. The sessions allowed time for participants to discuss the programs as well as the opportunity to watch the videotapes. The rationale and goals of both programs were very similar, but the content and format were quite dissimilar.

Both programs reflected a good understanding of the characteristics of family day care. They recognized that providers are spread over a wide geographic area, are home-bound and often isolated by the nature of the job, and that many conventional training programs are designed for center caregivers and inadvertently discourage family day care participation.

The major goal of both programs was to improve the quality of day care by providing relevant, useful training for a large number of providers. A second goal was to find an efficient, cost-effective means to do this. Efficiency and effectiveness were enhanced in both projects through cooperation with related agencies and the public television stations. The projects also achieved efficiency by making the best trainers and child care experts available to a large number of providers. A much larger population could benefit from their expertise than would benefit in a class or workshop. The Pennsylvania project determined that when the cost of producing the series and printing the accompanying manual was divided by the number of viewers, the cost was $8.00 per viewer for each half-hour program.

The effectiveness of the training programs was achieved by first assessing providers' needs and writing a planning curriculum to meet those needs. The content was developed with input from experienced providers, and the scripts were written by highly skilled child care and development specialists. Credibility was added to both programs by filming the videotapes in experienced provider's homes.

Following is specific information about each of the TV training programs:

A Spoonful of Loving

Topics: A Gourmet Guide to Family Day Care: what it takes to be a provider, advantages of home day care, getting started, relationships with parents.

Starting from Scratch--Birth to Three Years: development from one month to three years, toilet training, activities.

Natural Ingredients--The Preschool and School-Age Child: developmental characteristics, the importance of play, how children learn.

A Recipe for Happy Children: planning the environment, daily activities, guiding behavior.

A Good Measure of Safety: accident prevention and first aid.

Format: Five half-hour programs hosted by a television journalist. Each half-hour program deals with the topics listed above. Content is discussed by the host and accompanied by examples from family day care homes. A manual to accompany the series is distributed to all providers.

Evaluation: Pre- and Post-tests for each session assess the caregiver's understanding and retention of the information presented. General response to the concept and the programs by training experts, department of public welfare personnel and providers has been excellent.

Family Day Care--A Full-Time Job

Topics:
- Family Day Care as a Profession
- Day Care Home Registration
- Making Your Home a Caring Environment
- Activities for Children
- Working With Parents
- Observing Behavior
- Treating the Common Cold
- Programming for Children
- Discipline
- Accidents/Safety
- Helping Children Cope With Family Stress

Format: Five half-hour programs. The first three followed a TV "magazine" format (P.M. Magazine, specifically). These shows included two in-depth features separated by three short "departments." The fourth program was a conversation between six caregivers and a noted group facilitator. The fifth, a call-in show hosted by a well known television personality and a panel of child care specialists, was a discussion between the audience and a panel of experts.

A printed manual for caregivers and a trainer's manual were developed to accompany the series. These were also used by staff development specialists for one-to-one training and group training sessions with providers.

Evaluation: Several methods of evaluation were used to assess the impact of the series. Results showed an "across-the-board" favorable reaction to the series. It reduced the isolation felt by providers and increased their pride in their work. Tests showed that caregivers did understand the content and were using ideas presented in the series.

SUMMARY: TRAINING FOR FAMILY DAY CARE PROVIDERS

All the issues brought out in the training workshops have tremendous impact on training for family day care. It was clear from the enthusiasm engendered by the sessions on training that no single approach offers all the answers, but many options are worth pursuing. Even in the area of videotaped presentations for use on public television, we were shown two very different approaches, both of high quality and great appeal.

Agencies involved in training for family day care providers included institutions of higher education (colleges, universities, junior colleges, and vocational-technical institutions), local family day care associations, United Fund, health and welfare planning councils, and small non-profit training and resource networks or agencies. Formats included everything from training by TV stars using scripts written by child development experts and other day care providers, to peer support groups, to home visitors, to printed materials and newsletters, to workshops. Although the formats varied tremendously, they all seemed to have at least two things in common: a consistently high level of quality in the projects and sessions presented; and an eager, attentive and receptive audience.

The feeling of rapport and the intense interest displayed by so many participants and presentors is hard to describe. The many people who work in training in their communities, often in isolation and with very limited supports and resources, who have felt somewhat alone in their desert, found in this conference an oasis of mutual support and concern.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Part IV of the 1981 Family Day Care Technical Assistance Conference was a series of sessions on the U.S.D.A. Food Program. The sessions dealt with current trends, anticipated changes in the regulations, strategies for sponsors, and discussions on comprehending the system.

Although the sessions were helpful to managers, we have elected not to report them here because there have been many changes since the 1981 conference.

Many regulations in the child Care Food Project have changed and many more changes seem to be in the making. We feel that to include information that was current at the time of the conference could be more confusing than helpful.

A strong network of sponsors across the country has been formed and information is being shared. Every effort is being made to work with the U.S.D.A. in assessing the impact of various policy changes.

NET
JP

APPENDIX

CONFERENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

PROGRAM

ROSTER

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THE FOURTH ANNUAL

FAMILY DAY CARE
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CONFERENCE

PROGRAM

April 8, 9, and 10, 1981

ATLANTA BILTMORE HOTEL
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

Sponsored by:

THE CHILD CARE SUPPORT CENTER
1182 WEST PEACHTREE STREET, N.W.
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30309

PROGRAM

APRIL 8

9:00 - 10:00 a.m.	KEYNOTE PANEL: SERVING CHILDREN: SPECIAL AGES, SPECIAL NEEDS -Betty Simpson -Anne Nickerson -June Rogers -Carol Uecker -Mabel Pitts
10:15 - 12:00 Noon	MEETING THE NEEDS OF INFANTS -Alice Honig MEETING THE NEEDS OF SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN -Donna Kesler -Anne Nickerson MEETING THE NEEDS OF PRESCHOOL CHILDREN -June Rogers MEETING THE NEEDS OF EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN -Judy Calder -Carol Uecker MEETING THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN IN DANGER OF NEGLECT AND ABUSE -Mabel Pitts
12:00 Noon - 1:30 p.m.	LUNCH (On your own)
1:30 - 3:00 p.m. WORKSHOPS	TEACHING CHILD GUIDANCE: SOME OPTIONS FOR TRAINERS -Rhoda Redleaf CHILD CARE FOOD PROGRAM: UNDERSTANDING DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE REGULATIONS -Jordan Benderly FOOD EXPERIENCES FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS -Alice Honig MAKING FAMILY DAY CARE STRONG IN THE COMMUNITY -Sandy Swanson HELPING SKILLS FOR HOME VISITORS -Bonnie Arnold

APRIL 8 (Continued)

3:15 - 4:45 WORKSHOPS	LEGAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PROVIDERS -Lujuana Wolfe Treadwell THE NATIONAL CONSUMER COOPERATIVE BANK AS A RESOURCE TO FAMILY DAY CARE -Cheryl Fraracci -Donna Kesler CHILD CARE FOOD PROGRAM: MAINTAINING A GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH PROVIDERS -Estelle Brock -Mary Ulrich WORKING WITH LEGISLATORS AND OTHER DECISION-MAKERS -Helen Wimberley -Sophia Harris USING TELEVISION IN FAMILY DAY CARE TRAINING "A Spoonful of Lovin'" -Anna Jo Haynes
6:30 - 8:30 p.m.	DINNER (group) Program: COMPETENCY BASED TRAINING FOR FAMILY DAY CARE -Mary Lou Gilstad -Jean Kelly

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APRIL 9

8:00 - 8:30 a.m.	REGISTRATION
8:30 - 10:00 a.m.	PANEL: THE FUTURE OF FAMILY DAY CARE -Pat Maltz -June Rogers
10:15 - 12:00 Noon WORKSHOPS	HOW CHILDREN LEARN/HOW ADULTS LEARN -Rhoda Redleaf WHEN PROVIDERS SERVE ON A BOARD OF DIRECTORS -Janet Christianson -Lujuana Wolfe Treadwell

APRIL 9 (Continued)

10:15 - 12:00 Noon	FAMILY DAY CARE IN RURAL AREAS -Dorothy Pinsky NUTRITION EDUCATION FOR FAMILY DAY CARE PROVIDERS -Irene Rose CHILD CARE FOOD PROGRAM: MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY -Karen Thorenson -Lanna Bushman
12:00 - 1:30 p.m.	LUNCH (On your own)
1:30 - 3:00 p.m. WORKSHOPS	FAMILY DAY CARE AGENCIES: THE ROLE OF THE DIRECTOR -Vicki Higgenbotham -Laura Walker CHILD CARE FOOD PROGRAM: FUTURE LEGISLATIVE PROSPECTS -Mary Roberts RECENT RESEARCH FINDINGS AND THEIR APPLICATION TO FAMILY DAY CARE PROGRAMMING -Dorothy Rodriguez OVERCOMING FEELINGS OF ISOLATION WHEN CARING FOR CHILDREN -Susan Johnson USING TELEVISION IN FAMILY DAY CARE TRAINING "Family Day Care--A Full-Time Job" -Lucy Jones
3:15 - 4:45 p.m.	RESOURCE SHARING SESSION
7:00 - 8:00 p.m.	MEETING FOR FLORIDA PARTICIPANTS (Sponsored by Florida State University) -Susan Tourangeau, Convener
8:00 - 9:30 p.m. RAP SESSIONS AND CAUCUSES	NATIONAL FAMILY DAY CARE PROVIDERS' NETWORK OF AMERICA -Ruby Brunson, Convener DAY CARE CAMPAIGN

APRIL 9 (Continued)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
CHILD CARE PROGRAM

APRIL 10

8:30 - 10:00 a.m.
WORKSHOPS

EVALUATING THE EFFECT OF TRAINING
-Dorothy Pinsky

PARENT/PROVIDER COMMUNICATIONS
-Suzanne Warne

PROMOTING CHILD HEALTH IN FAMILY DAY CARE
-Judy Calder

CAREER OPTIONS FOR PROVIDERS
-Jim Nicholie
-Debbie Sgambelluri

DEVELOPING A FAMILY DAY CARE AGENCY
-Peggy Moreno
-Jo Carter

10:15 - 11:15
GENERAL SESSION

CONFERENCE EVALUATION AND PLAN FOR NEXT YEAR
-Nancy Travis
-Joe Perreault

11:15

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